THE ARGVMENT.

LVcius Tarquinius *(for his excessiue pride surnamed* Superbus*) after hee had caused his owne father in law* Seruius Tullius *to be cruelly murdred, and contrarie to the Romaine lawes and customes, not requiring or staying for the peoples suffrages, had possessed himselfe of the kingdome: went accompanyed with his sonnes and other Noble men of Rome, to besiege* Ardea, *during which siege, the principall men of the Army meeting one euening at the Tent of* Sextus Tarquinius *the Kings sonne, in their discourses after supper euery one commended the vertues of his owne wife: among whom* Colatinus *extolled the incomparable chastity of his wife* Lucretia. *In that pleasant humor they all posted to Rome, and intending by theyr secret and sodaine arriuall to make triall of that which euery one had before auouched, onely* Colatinus *finds his wife (though it were late in the night) spinning amongest her maides, the other Ladies were all found dauncing and reuelling, or in seuerall disports: whereupon the Noble men yeelded* Colatinus *the victory, and his wife the Fame. At that time* Sextus Tarquinius *being enflamed with* Lucrece *beauty, yet smothering his passions for the present, departed with the rest backe to the Campe: from whence he shortly after priuily withdrew himselfe, and was (according to his estate) royally entertayned and lodged by* Lucrece *at* Colatium. *The same night he treacherously stealeth into her Chamber, violently rauisht her, and early in the morning speedeth away.* Lucrece *in this lamentable plight, hastily dispatcheth Messengers, one to Rome for her father, another to the Campe for* Colatine. *They came, the one accompanyed with* Iunius Brutus, *the other with* Publius Valerius: *and finding* Lucrece *attired in mourning habite, demanded the cause of her sorrow. Shee first taking an oath of them for her reuenge, reuealed the Actor, and whole maner of his dealing, and withall sodainely stabbed her selfe. Which done, with one consent they all vowed to roote out the whole hated family of the* Tarquins: *and bearing the dead body to Rome,* Brutus *acquainted the people with the doer and manner of the vile deede: with a bitter inuective against the tyranny of the King, wherewith the people were so moued, that with one consent and a generall acclamation, the* Tarquins *were all exiled, and the state gouernment changed from Kings to Consuls.*